

Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 SCCT-01 USSS-00 AID-05

SSO-00 FBOE-00 CU-04 OC-05 CCO-00 EB-07 COME-00 PER-03

TRSE-00 OMB-01 AGR-10 ST-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 SCSE-00

SCA-01 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /096 W
----- 123936

O R 211216Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO USINFO WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3967

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

DEPT OF DEFENSE WASHDC

UNCLAS VIENTIANE 3576

USIA FOR IPS, IBS, CENTRAL NEWS DESK AND LAO SERVICE, IEA/L,
IOP/G, STATE FOR EA/P, EA/LC, S/PRS, BANGKOK FOR VOA AND PAO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MOPS, PINT, LA

SUBJ: USINFO

1. A GROUP OF LAO ENTERED THE AMERICAN EMBASSY COMPOUND WHERE THE MAIN ADMINISTRATIVE USAID BUILDINGS ARE LOCATED AT ABOUT 1:30 A.M. TODAY (MAY 21) AND TOOK IT OVER. BY 7 A.M., THERE WERE ABOUT 200 PEOPLE IN THE COMPOUND, APPARENTLY STUDENTS AND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE. THEY ENTERED THE RESTAURANT OF THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION AND LOOTED IT. THEY WERE UNABLE, HOWEVER, TO ENTER THE MAIN ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING OF USAID AND THE OFFICE BUILDING OF THE DEFENSE ATTACHE. A MARINE ON ROUTINE DUTY IN EACH BUILDING DENIED ACCESS, AND HAS REMAINED AT HIS POST THROUGHOUT THE DAY. EACH HAD EMERGENCY FOOD AND WATER SUPPLY AND WAS IN RADIO CONTACT WITH THE MISSION. THESE TWO MARINES AND ANOTHER
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AMERICAN IN CHARGE OF SOME COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

WERE THE ONLY AMERICANS INSIDE THE COMPOUND.

2. DEMONSTRATORS CARRIED SIGNS DENOUNCING USAID, THE CIA, A LOCAL COMPANY (TAPS) WHICH PROVIDES GUARD SERVICE TO SEVERAL EMBASSIES INCLUDING THE AMERICAN, AMERICANS IN GENERAL, AND CERTAIN AMERICAN AND LOCAL EMPLOYEES IN PARTICULAR. LOUDSPEAKERS BROADCAST SPEECHES DETAILING THE ABOVE GRIEVANCES.

3. DEMONSTRATORS HANDED OUT LEAFLETS LISTING SEVERAL DEMANDS, INCLUDING: DISSOLUTION OF USAID IN LAOS: ALL AMERICAN USAID EMPLOYEES TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY IN THREE DAYS; TURNING OVER TO THE LAO GOVERNMENT ALL USAID GOODS, INCLUDING PERSONNAL ARTICLES, BECAUSE THEY WERE BROUGHT INTO LAOS DUTY-FREE; TAXES PAID ON ANY INDIVIDUAL AMERICAN BELONGINGS REMOVED FROM THE COUNTRY; SEVERANCE PAY IN BAHT OR DOLLARS (NOT IN LAO CURRENCY) FOR ALL LOCAL USAID EMPLOYEES; ALL LOCAL EMPLOYEES OF THE AMERICAN MISSION TO BE PAID IN BAHT (THAI CURRENCY) OR DOLLARS.

4. THE DEMANDS WERE NEVER PRESENTED TO ANY OFFICIAL AMERICANS AT THE EMBASSY. AND THE STUDENTS DID NOT ATTEMPT TO NEGOTIATE. THE ATMOSPHERE, THOUGH RAUCUS, WAS NOT MENACING AND AMERICAN NEWSMEN AND OTHERS AT THE SITE WERE TREATED IN A FRIENDLY FASHION. PUSH-CARTS SOLD FOOD.

5. MEMBERS OF THE JOINT POLICE FORCE STOOD OUTSIDE THE COMPOUND, BUT DID NOT IN ANY WAY TRY TO CONTROL THE CROWD OR PREVENT DAMAGE TO PROPERTY. AT ONE POINT, DEMONSTRATORS ATTEMPTED TO FORCE ENTRY INTO A PRIVATE AMERICAN HOME NEAR THE COMPOUND. THE AMERICANS INSIDE ESCAPED, BUT IT IS NOT CERTAIN IF STUDENTS ENTERED THE HOME.

6. ELSEWHERE IN VIENTIANE, DEMONSTRATORS OCCUPIED THE USAID WAREHOUSE AT KILOMETER NINE ON A ROAD GOING SOUTH FROM VIENTIANE. MEMBERS OF THE JOINT PROTECTION FORCE (A MIXED MILITARY FORCE INSURING SECURITY IN AN AREA 15 KILOMETERS AROUND THE CITY LIMITS) THEN TOOK OVER WAREHOUSE GROUNDS AND REFUSED TO ALLOW EMBASSY PERSONNEL ENTRY. THE WAREHOUSE CONTAINS PL 480 COMMODITIES, SPARE UNCLASSIFIED

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PARTS FOR MACHINES AND VEHICLES, CEMENT, AND OTHER ARTICLES OF COMMON USE SUCH AS NAILS, WIRE, TOOLS, ETC.

7. AT THE AMERICAN HOUSING COMPOUND AT KILOMETER SIX, MEMBERS OF THE JOINT PROTECTION FORCE TOOK CONTROL AT THE ENTRANCE AND WOULD NOT LET AMERICANS GO IN, AT CERTAIN TIMES OR GO OUT, AT OTHER TIMES. THEY WERE PARTICULARLY CONCERNED THAT AMERICANS TOOK NO GOODS IN OR OUT WITH THEM. THERE

WERE NO DEMONSTRATORS AT KILOMETER SIX. THERE ARE 143 HOUSING
UNITS AT KM-6, AND ONLY MEMBER OF THE AMERICAN MISSION LIVE
THERE.

8. AMERICAN CHARGE CHRISTIAN A. CHAPMAN SAW BOTH PRIME
MINISTER SOUVANNA PHOUMA DN FOREIGN MINISTER PHOUMI VONGVICHIT
(A PATHET LAO) THIS MORNING TO PROTEST THE LACK OF PROTECTION.
BOTH MINISTERS TOLD THE CHARGE THEY WOULD TAKE
ACTION TO RESOLVE THE SITUATION.

9. A LATE AFTERNOON DOWNPOUR DAMPENED THE DEMONSTRATORS'
ENTHUSIASM. BUT US OF 6 P.M., BOTH THE VIENTIANE AND KM NINE
COMPOUNDS WERE NOT BACK IN MISSION HANDS.

10. AS FOR THE SAVANNAKHET SITUATION, MINISTER OF INTERIOR
PHENG PHONGSAVAN LEFT VIENTIANE TO NEGOTIATE WITH PROTESTORS
THERE ABOUT 1 P.M. TODAY, ACCORDING TO HIS OFFICE. IT
IS BELIEVED HIS DEPUTY MINISTER, A PATHET LAO, ACCOMPANIED
HIM. LAST REPORTS INDICATE ALL AMERICANS ARE SAFE, BUT
THERE HAS BEEN NO RADIO CONTACT SINCE YESTERDAY. A REPORT
YESTERDAY OF TWO ADDITIONAL HOSTAGES WAS APPARENTLY A FALSE
ALARM.

11. AS PER PRESS REPORTS, ABOUT 300 PATHET LAO
SOLDIERS ENTERED SAVANNAKHET YESTERDAY REPORTEDLY TO THE
ENTHUSIASTIC CHEERS OF A CROWD ESTIMATED AT ABOUT 20,000. THE
PATHET LAO FLEW A PLANELOAD OF JOURNALISTS DOWN TO WITNESS THE
EVENT. THE JOURNALISTS ALSO TALKED TO THE AMERICANS THERE.
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